

domiciliary care service





Providing Quality Eye Care for the Nursing Home Residents in the Merseyside area.

Welcome to Mersey Eyecare. Our mobile service proudly provides our patients with a tradition of quality service and friendly staff. Our optometrists take great satisfaction in offering every patient the absolute best in vision care.

Our expert optometrists and experienced staff will always take the time to answer your questions, explain treatment options and provide the highest quality eye health treatments available. Mersey Eyecare is committed to creating and maintaining an environment where exceptional service is achieved and recognised.

What we're all about...

Many elderly residents who live in nursing homes have un-met eye care needs. Undetected eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataract, diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration are both chronic and common. Vision loss and blindness can often be prevented with regular examinations and treatment.

Vision loss has a significant impact on the quality of life for residents. They become more susceptible to falls, are more functionally dependent on staff and daily routines such as eating, reading and watching TV are hampered. This contributes to frustration, anxiety and low moods, which in turn impact on staff.

Mersey Eyecare was established in 2002 and the director/optometrist Nadeem Syed has 10 years of experience, specialising in providing on-site eye care services. We utilise state-of-the-art portable equipment and have a wide selection of attractive spectacle frames. All services can be provided conveniently in your nursing home. Payment for the eye examination is generally covered by the NHS.

To ensure continuity for preventive and emergency eye care, each optometrist and dispensing assistant is dedicated to specific nursing homes. In this way, they become familiar with the facility staff and the resident's needs.

The Need is Great

Of all the senses, most people would say that they believe their eyesight is the most precious and yet functional blindness is a grim reality for 17% of all nursing home residents. Another 19% have lesser forms of visual impairment. Many of these cases could have been helped with regular professional eye care.

The majority of residents in long term care facilities are unable to walk far or to drive and cannot easily leave their facility for eye care; some are physically unable to even communicate that they are having eye problems. Unfortunately, few optometrists provide mobile services and often the optometrist to whom the resident has been loyal for years is unable to provide care once they are in a nursing facility.

The Right Choice

If you are a long-term care professional, a guardian, or a concerned relative of someone who will be requiring long-term care, choosing to have professional eye care services is one of the most important decisions you could help make. Sight can be protected with scheduled eye exams by Mersey Eyecare; no transportation is needed and we bring our practice to you.

You can trust the opticians at Mersey Eyecare to put your patients' eye needs first and to treat them with kindness and dignity. Good vision is integral to the highest possible quality of life and it is our mission to provide primary eye care to those for whom transport and physical mobility limitations have made traditional optician visits difficult or impossible.

Five Reasons Why Vision Care Is Important in a Nursing Facility:

Vision loss severely reduces mobility. It interferes with daily life to the extent that ordinary activities, such as walking, going outside and getting in and out of a bed or chair are made difficult or impossible.

Poor vision increases the likelihood of falling. Obstacles not seen become hazards, especially if balance tends to be poor. Even something as simple as a wet spot on the floor can be dangerous. Good vision helps to protect residents from the danger that surrounds them daily.

As the elderly become visually impaired, they tend to have more physical ailments and experience more fluctuations in appetite. Food is difficult to eat if it cannot be seen, and is therefore less appealing. It is difficult for them to take care of what they can't clearly see and so skin care and hygiene can suffer. Good vision makes life more enjoyable.

Vision impairment has been found to affect the results of rehabilitation programs. Physical, occupational and restorative therapies proceed more effectively when the patient can see clearly what is being demonstrated. Vision loss is also associated with lower morale, depression, social isolation and reduced feelings of self-worth and emotional security. If the majority of information about the world comes to the normally sighted through their sense of sight, a resident who has become visually impaired may feel very much alone, even when surrounded by others.

What Triggers the Need for Eye Care?

- > Diagnosis of diabetes, stroke or dementia
- > Diagnosis of cataract, glaucoma or macular disease
- > Red eyes, eye pain, or sudden vision loss
- > Blurred vision or difficulty focussing
- > Decreasing ability to function safely
- > Poorly fitting or broken eye glasses
- > Wellness and prevention require regular exams

Benefits to Nursing Home ...

- > No transportation expense
- > Staff time spent supervising patients to maintain their safety is reduced.
- > No charge to the facility
- > Offering eye care adds value to your facility and attracts new residents.
- > Reduced risk of falls and skin tears and accompanying health costs.
- > Documentation of previous and future services

Benefits to Resident

- > Eye exams are conveniently "On Site"
- > Reduces confusion associated with dementia
- > Reduces anxiety
- > Glasses are clearly labelled with the resident's name
- > Optometrists and family have consistent dialogue, ensuring a full medical history is possible.



Nursing Home Program Details

Nursing Care Mission Statement

Good vision is integral to the highest possible quality of life; it is our mission to provide primary eye care to those residents of nursing facilities for whom transportation needs and physical limitations make traditional eye care visits difficult or impossible.

Why Should Eye Care be Delivered in a Nursing Setting?

When an individual becomes a resident of a skilled nursing facility, transportation for medical care can be difficult, expensive and sometimes dangerous for the patient. Whenever possible, it may be advantageous to have medical care delivered entirely within the facility.

Here are some clear advantages:

- > *Fewer Medical Errors and Record keeping is more complete.*

External opticians often return to the care facility with only minimal documentation of the service rendered and the proposed plan of care. This increases the possibility of medical errors: incorrect orders being instituted and follow-up care not being delivered as planned. External opticians often do not have access to the patient's complete medical history and records, may not be aware of the patient's full medical status, or of other pertinent data held on file at the facility.

- > *Mobile examination equipment is more appropriate to this environment.*

Many nursing home residents have moderate to severe physical limitations that impede traditional examination equipment or techniques. Mobile examination equipment is designed specifically to be used with these patients.

The patient's environment is more familiar; residents are more relaxed in familiar surroundings.

- > *We are helping you to stay more competitive!*

The quality and choice of services available to a resident is perhaps the most important factor in choosing a care facility. Having an excellent on-site eye care program is an important part of keeping your full-service facility competitive in the growing long-term market.

How it all Works

We will fax you a list of patients 3 weeks ahead of each visit. At the initial visit to each patient, we may also request a copy of the medical records and any previous known ocular history.

We will require a setup area that is reasonably private and with the facility to dim the lights to near darkness. We will set up our equipment and perform our service only in this room and not impose on your public spaces and rooms. The patients will be brought to the examination room, dressed and ready for examination. Although individual room visits are not as efficient with our equipment, they can be done in special cases. We will chart all our records and orders and we ask that you keep these records onsite for at least one calendar year. We will provide you with a sheet summarizing each patient's primary findings and recommendations at the end of our visit.

You will receive notice of the date of our next visit 3 weeks in advance. We will contact you if needed to agree the details of each visit if there have been any changes to our equipment or the room you wish us to use.

At the end of each visit, we will provide you with a tabular summary detailing which patients were seen, their overall status, important issues and when we will need to re-evaluate their case.

If a case is urgent and there is a medical need to proceed to a hospital, we will provide the order requesting immediate referral to a surgical provider.

For cases recommending referral to a specialist for surgery or other non-critical treatment, we will first discuss the options with the patient and, if deemed prudent, contact the resident's legal guardian to advise them of the final recommendation, or request the facility to contact the legal guardian to begin a dialog. We respect the patient's right to refuse treatment, but have a medical responsibility to inform patients and guardians of available treatment options.

Staff Examinations

We visit your facility to provide care for your residents, but we are happy to see any of your staff at either of our two practices situated in the Aigburth area. We are always available to answer staff questions, but must decline staff involvement if it interferes with our care of your residents.

Glasses

For those residents that require glasses, we will deliver the glasses in approximately 2 weeks. Please call us if faster delivery is required. Delivery time may be dependent on payment.

A resident who needs glasses not covered by the NHS will have the invoice mailed to their responsible party. All private pay orders must be paid in advance.

Repairs: We can usually make minor repairs on site, but for those instances this is not possible, we will take the glasses back to our practice and aim to return them within 2 weeks. For those that are eligible, free replacement pairs are available at the discretion of the NHS.

Engraving and Loss Prevention

Unless otherwise requested, all spectacles will be engraved on the inside margin of the left frame side with the resident's last name. This will help to prevent loss and mix-ups.

Training

Imagine how life would be if you could only see half of the world. Hearing voices coming out of the darkness to one side of you, bumping into things that you didn't know were there, not knowing that there was still food left on one side of your dinner plate. It's hard to imagine - closing one eye will not show you as you will still see both sides of your world. At one of our interactive training sessions we don't tell you what it's like, we show you what it's like.

Mersey Eyecare can provide training to nurses, home managers, care assistants, social workers, occupational therapists, social workers and care home inspectors. The sessions are very hands-on and you see how poor sight can influence behaviours, trying on special simulation spectacles which allow you to see the world through the patient's eyes.

Over the years, we have seen so many people come to our training believing that they were just going to sit for an hour or so, listening to someone bore them about eyes. These people leave our sessions buzzing, enthused and surprised by what they have seen and learned. The sessions are kept light and there is a fair amount of fun.

So what does it cost? We provide all of our training free of charge! We believe that, especially in care homes, doing an eye test and giving someone glasses is not enough. Care staff needs to understand how poor vision can affect behaviour and how optimising vision can improve quality of life. We believe our training provides this.

Training will consist of:

- > Hemianopia
- > Diabetes
- > Cataracts
- > Glaucoma
- > Macular degeneration
- > Dementia eyecare
- > Dry eye/blepharitis
- > Equipment

Conclusions

Test Chart

This computer based sight test chart provides an unprecedented range of tests that will allow us to examine all our patients with the greatest efficiency. Using a laptop computer we can adapt to various testing conditions and the test chart can be calibrated for use at almost any distance. We can carry out almost all the tests that we would normally be able to carry out in our practice. In stark comparison to the level of assessments possible with the older style test charts that are still being used by many domiciliary eye care providers.

Retinomax

The Autorefractor is the most accurate way of assessing the refractive status of the eye in mobile eye care. The refractive state of the eye determines how light focuses in the eye. This instrument allows accurate measurement for a correct prescription of glasses.

Welch Allyn Pan Optic Ophthalmoscope

The Welch Allyn Pan Optic Ophthalmoscope is a microscope that allows the optician to view the interior structures of the eyeball leading to the identification of glaucoma, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and hypertensive retinopathy.

Portable lensometer

The Portable lens meter is a very precise instrument that allows the optician to examine older glasses to determine the strength inside the lenses.

Eyecare Rebound Tonometer

This Tonometer allows us to measure the ocular pressures (important in the assessment of glaucoma), without the need for using anaesthetic drops.

Dementia and Sight Loss

All the staff at mersey eyecare have been specifically trained in sight loss and how it relates to dementia. We have been accredited by the Alzheimer's society and have the knowledge and the experience to deal with your patients who are suffering with dementia. Good vision is required for many activities associated with lowering risk and keeping well when you have dementia. Someone with sight loss and dementia may have an increased sense of disorientation. The ability to cope with symptoms of dementia is reduced by sight loss and the ability to adapt to sight loss is undermined by dementia.

Visual difficulties with dementia include:

- > Visual acuity
- > Spatial awareness
- > Perception of depth
- > Contrast sensitivity
- > Colour vision
- > Misinterpretation.

All these difficulties are enhanced if the patient is not wearing an up-to-date prescription.

When examining patients with a cognitive impairment, we are aware that there can be a wide range of effects on a patient's memory and personality. We have the experience to be flexible, where necessary adapting techniques and using alternative methods. We understand that we may need longer to complete the eye examination, or alternatively we may shorten the examination, with emphasis on objective techniques. We understand that there are conditions other than refractive error that are common in this group of patients, such as reduced contrast sensitivity and colour vision changes. Before deciding to prescribe glasses, we take into account mobility issues and the possibility of falls.

When choosing an eye care provider, it is vital to be sure that they have the experience and knowledge to deal with this group of patients.

Hearing Aids

As well as providing detailed high quality eye examinations, Mersey Eyecare can look after your residents' hearing. We now have a fully qualified hearing aid audiologist as part of our team, who will be happy to carry out regular hearing checks for your residents.

All hearing checks are free and consist of either:

> *Free 5 minute check.*

A very quick and simple check to reassure your residents of their hearing level, and to advise if a further assessment would be of value to you.

> *Free full hearing test.*

An expansive hearing assessment which will also demonstrate the many solutions available with digital hearing aids. If a hearing instrument would be beneficial to the patient, the audiologist will advise you on your options including the very latest in barely visible aids.

> *Modern digital technology*

All of our hearing aids are digital and so give high quality amplification and sound processing to provide greater clarity and help the patient hear better. The main difference between our ranges is the number of technical features and benefits that they provide, and the sensitivity at which we can precisely tune them to meet your individual needs.

Within each range of hearing aids you have a choice of wearing styles and colours, including:

- > Completely in canal
- > In the ear
- > Receiver in ear
- > Behind the ear.

Our professional hearing aid audiologist will help you find the one which best suits you. We are not just here to sell you a hearing aid; we want to provide you with the best hearing solutions.

All of your follow-up appointments are free of charge.

Unfortunately, at present the supply of hearing aids is not available on the NHS and is a private service. If one of your residents fails the free hearing check and is entitled to a free hearing aid via the NHS, then a referral will be provided via the patient's GP.

Our optometrists at mersey eyecare are members of the general optical council and the association of optometrists. They are also licensed and trained to provide the highest level of optometric services. All our staff are fully trained and experienced in the domiciliary field.

Through annual continuing professional education sessions, our optometrists are committed to enhancing their knowledge in the treatment and management of ocular disease and visual disorders. This training allows our opticians to be at the forefront of state of the art and emerging technologies, to best serve our patients.

Mersey eyecare considers the welfare of our patients to be our number one priority. This is reflected in a number of ways through the services that we provide.

Firstly we are dedicated to providing eye care services to all of the housebound community.

Secondly all staff members are highly trained professional and friendly.

Thirdly due to our liverpool location, we can provide a more efficient, reliable and quick service to our patients.

Thank you for taking the time to read through what mersey eyecare can provide and how we can become a valuable part of your caring team. If you would like further information or to take the necessary steps to allow mersey eyecare to provide your domiciliary eye care, then please contact us on 0151 727 36 36.

If you currently have an eye care provider and you would like to change to mersey eyecare, we will make the transition as smooth as possible. We will also contact your existing provider to inform them of the change and complete all necessary paperwork on your behalf.



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